

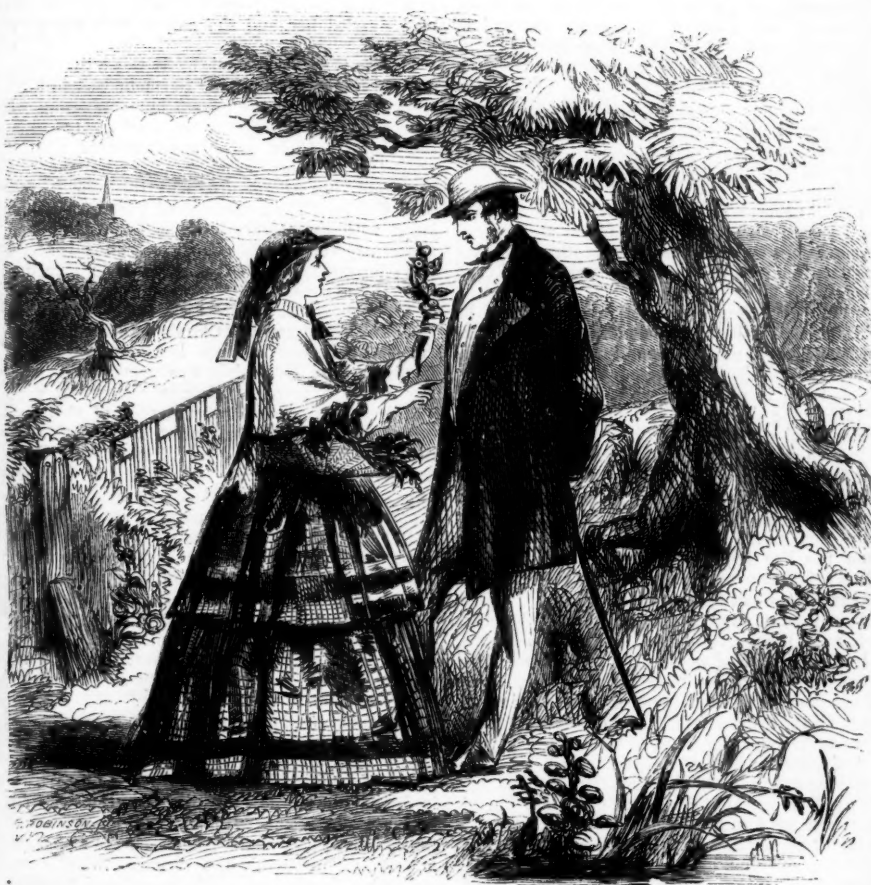
# THE LEISURE HOUR

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ELLEN AND HENRY TEMPLE BOTANIZING.

## A WIFE'S STORY.

CHAPTER VII.—MORE CHANGES, AND ANOTHER  
"EXCELLENT CONNECTION."

THE time allotted for my visit to Mr. Temple was within two or three weeks of its close, when one evening we were greatly surprised by the sudden and unannounced appearance of Henry Temple. I do not know what reasons he gave to his uncle for

paying another and an unexpected visit to the parsonage; but, whatever they were, he was welcomed very warmly, and it seemed as though he did not intend to beat a speedy retreat.

For my own part, I had no idea, at that time, that I had anything to do with Harry's erratic movements. I did not suppose that he had any thought of me, except as his former childish com-

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panion; and I am sure I had never thought of him in any more intimate relationship. I liked him, however; and without hesitation I accepted his invitations to resume our botanizing expeditions. But, after a few days, I could but notice, not only that he was very stupid about plants and flowers, but that he generally turned the conversation to my recent way of life in London, and seemed wonderfully inquisitive about my present tastes and pursuits. He was communicative in his turn—more communicative, indeed, than I had chosen to be. He described his house in Sussex, told me how he intended to employ his time when he was “regularly settled down,” and spoke enthusiastically of his mother, whom he evidently revered and admired as one of the best of womankind, and wished that I knew her.

After he had once or twice renewed these subjects, I began to think that Henry Temple was getting dull and prosy, till, at length, the suspicion dawned upon me that he had a motive in these disclosures and wishes. But if he had, he did not reveal it; and, at length, my visit came to an end.

I shall never, while I live, forget the last evening I passed with my dear old friend at the parsonage. His ordinary cheerfulness seemed to have forsaken him; he was unusually serious, and even solemn.

“We may never meet again, my dear child,” he said, taking my hand in his, and speaking tremulously. “I have not yet come to that time of life when the grasshopper becomes a burden, and in which there is no pleasure; but, nevertheless, I feel that ‘the silver cord’ is being loosed, and the golden bowl will soon be broken. My Master has not much more work for me to do on earth, Ellen; and I thank God, through Jesus Christ, that I can hear his summons to depart without dread. And you, Ellen, have perhaps a long, and I trust a happy and useful life before you; but it will be none the less happy and prosperous for an old friend’s blessing and prayers. Let us kneel together for the last time, my dear Ellen.” And in fervent, earnest supplications, as we knelt together in the old library, he poured out his soul for me, entreating that God would bless me indeed—that he would preserve me from temptation, guide me in every doubtful and perplexing step, give me strength to perform aright the duties of life, and grace to live and serve him all my days.

And thus our last conversation closed.

I cannot say certainly, that Mr. Temple had observed in me anything that gave him uneasiness; nor am I sure that he had fathomed Harry’s thoughts respecting me. I believe, however, that he had; and that his anxiety for us both found expression in prayer when he would have felt it impossible to have offered advice, or caution, or warning, in other words.

For the time I was deeply affected. I hastened to my chamber, and there, in agitation of mind, made many resolutions. But, alas! like the morning cloud and early dew, they passed away.

On my arrival in London, I found, as I expected, my aunt and cousin in full and feverish preparation for Clara’s wedding. Let me lightly pass over this event; there was nothing in it worthy of record. It was, looking at it as a matter of worldly

policy, “an excellent connection,” as Aunt Seymour had spoken, and continued to speak of it. Mr. Colvin was a rich man. His father had been a merchant, had amassed large property, had retired from commerce, and bequeathed his fortune unimpaired to his only son, who, when he had spent more than half the ordinary period of existence in affluence, luxury, idleness, and dissipation, be thought himself that it was high time to marry. As an old business connection of his father, he had kept up an acquaintance with my uncle Seymour, and, when but little expected, he had made an offer to Clara.

Poor Clara had not much reason to respect the man whom she had promised to marry; but the offer dazzled her, and she fancied that she could love him.

And so they were married. It was a grand day at — Square. My uncle Seymour was in high spirits, and one of his gayest humours; and we were all of us too busy and too much excited to be thoughtful. Clara paled and trembled a little while the ceremony was progressing; but she soon recovered her composure, and thenceforth was Mrs. Colvin. The husband had the air of a man jaded with the world; but he was polite, and apparently well pleased with himself and all around him; for no expense had been spared to give due *éclat* to the wedding.

The honeymoon was passed away at Clifton; and then we returned to Clara’s future home near London. It was a large house, magnificently furnished, and Mr. Colvin was proud of it. He was evidently proud of his new and pretty wife, also, and in the constant succession of visits received and returned, and entertainments given in honour of the alliance, and from which there seemed no escape for me. I soon lost the salutary impressions which my quiet visit to my old friend’s country parsonage had temporarily revived.

If there was little manifestation of heart piety in the family and household of my uncle Seymour, there was, at least, some outward respect paid, as I have said, to a profession of religion. In the house of Mr. Colvin this respect was exchanged for utter disregard of its very forms. And yet my aunt had spoken of Clara’s marriage with an avowed contemner of Christianity as “an excellent connection!”

The amusements and fashionable occupation of the gay world are often spoken of as “a whirlpool;” and perhaps no single word can more correctly describe them. At first the hapless bark is drawn almost imperceptibly into the deceitful current, and seems to labour slowly and reluctantly in its giddy course; but soon the attraction is fearfully increased, the doomed vessel more swiftly revolves round the depressed and foaming centre, till all control of its movements is lost, and every attempt to escape destruction is futile. Thus, to some degree at least, was it with me, in the house of my cousin. It was well for me that an Almighty arm was eventually stretched out to rescue me from the perilous delirium and frenzy of folly into which I had suffered myself to be drawn.

I had not yet returned to my uncle Seymour’s house when a letter, deeply edged with black, reached me by post. My hand trembled as I

opened it; and it was as I feared—my kind friend, Mr. Temple, was dead. The letter was written by Henry, in evident distress; and it contained little besides the mournful intelligence, only that on his return, through London, he hoped he might have permission to call on me in — Square.

The sorrowful news gave me a sufficient reason for withdrawing from the gay society at my cousin's, and for returning to the house which was still my home.

It is not enough to say that I deeply regretted the death of my early friend. I was struck with remorse. Mr. Temple's kindness and affection for me had been unceasingly displayed, and I loved him with a childlike love. And yet how had I disregarded his advice and cautions, and even treated his letters with criminal neglect! And what influence had his instructions had upon me? Conscience accused me.

Henry Temple paid his promised visit, and he was accompanied by his mother. They remained some weeks in London, for Henry had business to settle connected with his uncle's will. They often called at — Square; and it would have been affectation in me to have pretended ignorance of Henry's state of mind towards myself. At length he took courage to ask me to become his wife, and I did not refuse, for I felt that I could safely trust my happiness to his keeping. Could I promise myself that it was in my power to promote his happiness? I would not suffer myself to doubt it; and yet I might have doubted, for there were some points on which we widely differed, and I ought to have questioned whether the fondness I had acquired for the dissipations of society, and which Henry positively disliked, would fit me for the calm domestic life to which he looked forward with such delight.

But I would not think of this. I was proud of my friend, and believed that I could adapt myself to his tastes, or that I could prevail upon him to adapt himself to mine. Let me add, too, that the distress I had so recently felt at the loss of his uncle, had somewhat sobered me, and withdrawn me temporarily from the more frivolous occupations which had obtained such a hold on my affections.

There was one disqualification, however, which did not enter into my calculations. I shall refer to this hereafter. Meanwhile, I was congratulated on the "conquest" I had made. My aunt Seymour was loud in her approbation of my intended husband. She had spoken of Clara's marriage as being "an excellent connection," and now the phrase was constantly repeated.

"But there is one thing you must positively manage, Ellen," she said, one day when we were alone, and had been talking of my approaching espousals—"I mean about Mrs. Temple—Henry's mother. What do you think of her, Ellen?"

I liked her very much, I replied; she seemed such a nice, quiet, comfortable lady, and was so fond of Henry.

"All this is very true, my dear," said my aunt; "but yet I do not like the idea of your having a mother-in-law always at your elbow. You must use your influence with your husband to make some other arrangement. When you are married and settled down, you will find it very

inconvenient to have two mistresses at Temple Court."

"But, aunt," I said, "you know how fond Henry is of his mother, and that he has said, from the very first, that though Temple Court belongs to him, he would consent to live there only on condition that it should always be her home. And it does not seem right to wish Mrs. Temple to be turned out of her old home, to make room for a stranger. Besides, you know, aunt, I have quite agreed to Harry's proposal; and it is settled among us all that Temple Court is large enough to hold two Mrs. Temples."

"How very absurdly you talk, Ellen," replied my aunt; "and you use such an odd expression! Of course, dear, you would not wish Mr. Temple to turn his mother out of house and home. Nobody could wish that, and I am sure I did not hint at such a thing. But if she could be induced to think that it would be more comfortable for all parties to live in that very pretty cottage that Henry talks about, and that belongs to her—"

"Henry would call this a 'turning out,' aunt," I argued; "and I am sure he would never agree to it. It is not as though Mrs. Temple's cottage was near Temple Court—it is ten miles off, aunt."

"Well, my dear, and ten miles is not so very far off. You may depend on it that I am right; for as to Temple Court being large enough for two mistresses, you will find that to be quite a mistake. You have no idea how many disagreeable things there will be connected with it. The servants will not know who they are to look to for orders, and will be sure to make it an excuse for being negligent; and then, if any little difference of opinion should arise between you and Henry's mother, he will, as likely as not, wish you to yield to her authority; and, at any rate, there will be always a danger of his setting his mother up as an example for you, and you know how unpleasant that would be. And there will be little matters every day to bring you fresh annoyances. Why, even your letters, you know, must be directed to 'Mrs. Temple, Junior,' or they will fall into the hands of your mother-in-law. In short, you will find that she will be the real, and you only the nominal, mistress in your husband's own house. You may rely upon it, it will not do."

"But what can I do, aunt?" I asked, in some alarm, for I confess I was a little startled by the vision my aunt had conjured up to frighten me. I remembered having read, in some book of eastern travels, that it is the custom among the Turks, I think, for the mother-in-law to be recognised as the mistress of her son's household and family, and that the poor wife or wives have a shocking time of it, in consequence. I had never made this application of the statement before, but now I did make it.

"You must not do anything rashly, Ellen," Aunt Seymour rejoined, "and you must not, by any means, seem to wish old Mrs. Temple away. But you must contrive to make her think how much more pleasant it would be for her to have a house of her own, and so get her to make the proposal to Henry. Why, bless you, Ellen, a wife can carry almost any point she likes, if she is but discreet, and sets about it in the right way and at the right time. I should never have got



on at all with your uncle if I had not found out the way to manage him; for you must have seen how dreadfully obstinate he is when he takes anything into his head. You know that, don't you, Ellen?"

I acknowledged that perhaps my uncle was at times rather "firm."

"Now, how can you flatter Mr. Seymour so, Ellen?" asked my aunt, laughing at the hesitating qualification of her stronger term of reprobation. "Firm, indeed! Oh, but he is nothing short of obstinate; and you must have seen that perpetually. He has got a notion, too, that his will ought to be law; and, by the way, my dear, do you not think that Mr. Temple has a little of this sort of—well, I won't call it obstinacy, but *firmness*, as you say, in his composition?"

"Dear aunt, how can you say so?" I exclaimed. "I do not think he is at all like"—like my uncle, I was about to say; but I stopped short. "I mean, that I have never seen anything like what you call obstinacy in Henry."

"Ah, well; but you are not married yet, Ellen; and a lover is sometimes very different from a husband; and you will see by and by that, like most of them, he will have an opinion of his own."

"I hope so, aunt," I said.

"Of course, my dear; but you know what I mean. However, I was speaking of *my* husband, and not of Mr. Temple; and let me tell you, as a great secret, that the only way to deal with him is to let him fancy that he always has his own way. So, if I want anything very particular, I take care to let the proposal come from him; and that is easily enough managed. And then, to make it more certain, it is a good thing to throw in a little gentle, innocent opposition; and you cannot conceive how this quickens the gentleman's eagerness to carry out his own plans, as he is simple enough to think them. There, my dear Ellen, you have my recipe for ruling a husband; and a word to the wise, you know, is enough."

The conversation ended here, for we were interrupted by the entrance of Henry and his mother; and I could but notice how cordially my aunt received Mrs. Temple. As for myself, I felt depressed, though I knew not why. I was not aware then, that the first seeds of mistrust had been sown in my heart, which were thereafter to produce bitter fruits.

#### THE LONDON LAW COURTS.

WHEN we, who are non-litigants and non-expectants, who are interested in no devised estates, and are parties to no suits in law, chance, in cursorily glancing at the almanac, to come upon such expressions as "Easter Term begins," "Michaelmas Term ends," and so on, we are apt to pass them without a thought, heedless of the tremendous import of these simple words to numbers of our fellow countrymen. In this case it is emphatically true that ignorance is bliss; and he may count himself happy indeed, in comparison with the victims of the law's uncertainty and delay, to whom the opening and the shutting of the temples of judicature is a matter of personal indifference.

But to lawyers and litigants the advent of term-

time is the opening of an active and adventurous campaign, in which honour and emolument are to be won, and in which all who are qualified for the strife are eager and anxious to take a share. The outward and visible phenomena of term-time in London are various, and will hardly escape altogether the notice of the duller observer. If a reading man, he will mark the appearance of the law reports in the columns of the morning paper on his breakfast-table, which will be continued during the whole of the sittings of the several courts, and put him in possession, if he likes, of the facts and special peculiarities of each individual case. And if he avoid the newspapers, and be but the idler peripatetic upon town, he shall not walk far without coming in contact with evidence of another kind, which is always most liberally bestowed in the high-ways and bye-ways bordering on the arenas of justice. This evidence appears in the shape of a tall figure enveloped in a flowing black gown, whose head is crowned, and enlarged to three times its natural size, by curly spoils ravished from the tail of the Banbury horse; whose feet are cased in the neatest of shining pumps, and on whose breast depend a couple of clerical-looking bands of the finest cambric. During "term," this apparition meets you in the oddest places; now it is seen in a state of calm dignity, munching consecutive buns and sandwiches at the counter of the confectioner; now it is hastily lunching at the bar of a neighbouring tavern; and anon it is seen, in a bath of perspiration, under that nightmare of a wig, plunging desperately through the ocean of wheels and rampant horses that flanks the embouchure of Chancery Lane, and diving headlong out of sight into the gaping maw of the Temple over the way. Wait patiently for a little while, and you will see it emerge again, bearing this time a ponderous violet-coloured bag, crammed to bursting, in one hand, and a bundle of sealed parchments in the other, and followed closely in the rear by a distracted clerk, or perhaps two, loaded with foolscap documents tied with red tape. But this apparition is by no means a solitary one; you see him as often in groups as in the individual, and oftener if you look in the right place; a whole cataract of them will pour from a side-door in one of the tall buildings of "the Inn;" or, in the pleasant shady walks that characterise and adorn the legal inclosures of London, you will find them in strolling bands, discussing, it may be, some moot point in equity, and enlightening each other by the exchange of mutual sagacity. For these men are the incarnations of legal wisdom and experience, who are destined to handle the machinery of the law, and to expedite (or to frustrate, as it may happen), the decrees of even-handed justice.

The plenteous presence of legal functionaries in their professional costume being always an indication that the courts are sitting, we shall amuse ourselves with a stroll into one or two of them, just to see what is going on. The oldest of the English law courts is entitled to the preference and therefore we betake ourselves to Westminster Hall. The oldest case upon record was tried in Westminster about eight hundred years ago, when the Abbot of Peterborough was cited before the Conqueror, in the year 1069. For the next two

centuries the law courts were held wherever the sovereign happened to be resident, but in the reign of Henry III they were permanently fixed at Westminster. For details of some of the remarkable trials and events of which this spot has been the scene, we refer the reader to a series of papers, entitled "Echoes of Westminster Hall," in Vol. V. of the "Leisure Hour."

As we enter Palace Yard, a few of the white-wigged gownsmen are straggling into the huge hall, followed here and there by an inky satellite or an anxious client; others, bag-laden and busy, are coming forth and driving hastily off to town. We find Westminster Hall quiet, and comparatively deserted, save by a band of policemen drawn up in a double rank. The House of Commons is prorogued, and the customary crowd of constituents and expectants has disappeared. Almost every person who comes in, disappears also at one of the doors on the right. We follow the general example, and mounting a few steps, and pushing open a couple of doors, one within the other, and which are made to move noiselessly on their hinges, find ourselves in the presence—of an old woman sitting at an apple-stall, supplemented with a collection of stale gingerbread and sweet-stuff, and close by the side of a roaring fire large enough to roast a baron of beef. This is the lobby of the Queen's Bench Court, and the huge fire, it is plain, is for the purpose of warming the court itself, which, by a proper disposition of the doors and drapery, can be made to receive as much of the heat as is desirable. The apple and bun-stall, which is probably welcome enough to the exhausted litigants and listeners, is at the present day all that is left of the famous array of shops which at a former period formed one of the chief attractions of Westminster Hall, and made it a fashionable promenade.

Passing through the ventilating lobby, which is just now at a temperature of about eighty degrees, and feeling our way through the screening drapery, we are in the Court of Queen's Bench, so called from the ancient custom of holding courts before the monarch in person. The court is a single chamber, some forty feet square, and about as many in height. On this gloomy wintry day, it appears but dimly lighted from a domed circular lantern in the roof. It is crowded with people to an inconvenient extent, and it is no easy matter to obtain even a glimpse; but, after a little waiting, a sudden vacancy elevates us to a high seat in the rear, which is the best point of view. Notwithstanding the crowd, the nearest possible approach to silence prevails; and if at any time there be heard a hum of voices or a shuffling of feet, it is quelled in a moment by an admonitory "hush—sh—sh," which, passing rapidly round, subsides into stillness. It would seem that when annoyances of this kind do occur, they originate much more frequently among the professionals in wigs and gowns than among the spectators.

Under a carved canopy, and in front of the royal arms, raised upon a kind of dais, sit four judges. Their costume differs materially from that of the legal brotherhood already described; and though a foreigner might fairly stigmatise it as barbarous, it is yet imposing, striking, and in a degree dignified. It consists of the white wig aforemen-

tioned, but considerably amplified by two side appendages that rest upon the shoulders—and of a scarlet gown most redundant in material, and disposed in ample folds, the whole being bounteously brodered with ermine. The judge who speaks most frequently, and with a deliberate kind of hesitation which seems about to falter, but never does, is Lord Campbell; the one at his right is Chief Justice Coleridge, and the two at his left are Chief Justices Wightman and Erle. Each of the judges has a small separate writing-desk before him. Below them are seated a number of professionals, in official costume, taking notes at a long table. Again below them, in a kind of pit, are a rank of non-professionals on a bench, whom we take to be clients, witnesses, or persons interested in the causes expected to come on. In front of these is another long table, well supplied with writing materials, over which a round number of large white heads are stooping and peering on the documents which grow into existence beneath their fingers. In front of them, and facing the judges, are several consecutive rows of seats filled with the lawyers, advocates, barristers, and so on, who are concerned, or supposed to be concerned, in the several questions which have to be adjudicated. Behind these, in rows rising one above another, are the seats allotted to the public; and these, as well as those set apart for the legal gentlemen, are all crammed to overflowing.

The spectators manifest, by the attention they bestow, the interest they really take in the case which is going forward. It is a libel case, and the counsel for the plaintiff, who interlards every period with "mylud," and "yerludship," is zealously endeavouring to impress the bench with a sense of the profound injury his client has received at the hands, or rather the lips, of the libeller. But his lordship is not very penetrable to the counsel's arguments. He interrupts him in the middle of a rather windy piece of rhetoric, and questions him as to certain admissions which the plaintiff had made to a witness who is present on his own side. These cannot be denied, and they constitute, in his lordship's opinion, a justification of the terms complained of as libellous; and in two or three words, which we fail to catch, the case is dismissed; the counsel bags his papers and vanishes, while the next case is called on.

Whatever takes place, there is not the slightest demonstration on the part of the spectators. Their singular gravity strikes us, and we cannot help speculating on the somewhat peculiar expression which characterises the majority of the faces present. Were we disposed to theorise on the matter, we should set down the greater part of the audience as old litigants, who in days past had won or lost some cause whose decision has determined the course of their destiny, and who, from having at a former period lived so long in an atmosphere of excitement, cannot now live without it. How else is the fact explainable that there are men, in no way interested in the causes tried, whose punctuality in attendance exceeds that of the judge himself, and who are never known to be absent during a single day or a single hour while the court is open?

It is not difficult to discriminate those persons interested in the question at issue from these old

stagers. The latter form a class who, for the most part, have never in their lives before been in a court of justice at all. They cannot settle down comfortably in a seat; or, if they do so for a moment, they are up and off at a tangent, as some sudden thought strikes them, either to cool their fever with a bout at the apple-stall, or to write a note at one of the desks in the rear, of which there is always one or more available, and thus to inform their counsel as to some vital point forgotten till that very moment, or perhaps then for the first time imagined. Then they are seen tiptoeing out under some sudden and secret impetus, and bustling in again in a breathless state; and not unfrequently will they be found pale, exhausted, and resigned as martyrs in some retired corner, ready to accept either fate—to rejoice in success, or to submit to defeat, so that they be only released from the pangs of suspense.

Leaving the Court of Queen's Bench, and elbowing through a throng of customers blockading the apple-stall, we enter at the second side door in Westminster Hall, and find ourselves in the Exchequer Court. The Exchequer Court exercises functions extra-judicial, and keeps up the observance of certain traditional customs and rites which are worth mention in this place. Thus, it regulates the election of Sheriffs. On the morrow of St. Martin's, November 12, a Privy Council is held to receive the report of the judges, of the persons eligible in the several counties to serve as sheriff. On the bench sits the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his figured silk gown trimmed with gold; next are the members of the Privy Council, the Lord Chancellor, and Judges of the Queen's Bench and Common Pleas; below sit the Judges and Chief Baron of the Exchequer, and on the left the Remembrancer of the Court. The judges report the names of three persons eligible for sheriff in each county, when excuses for exemption may be pleaded. The list being considered by the Privy Council, the names are finally determined on the approval of her Majesty in council, which is done by her Majesty pricking through the names approved on a long sheet of paper called the Sheriffs' Roll. The Sheriffs of London and Middlesex are, however, chosen by the Livery, but are presented on the morrow of the Feast of St. Michael, in the Court of Exchequer, accompanied by the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, when the Recorder introduces the Sheriffs and details their family history, and the Cursitor Baron signifies the sovereign's approval; the writs and appearances are read, recorded, and filed, and the sheriffs and senior under-sheriffs take the oaths, and the late sheriffs present their accounts. The Crier of the Court then makes proclamation for one who does homage for the Sheriffs of London to "stand forth and do his duty;" then the senior alderman below the chair rises, the usher of the court hands him a bill-hook, and holds in both hands a small bundle of sticks, which the alderman cuts asunder, and then cuts another bundle with a hatchet. Similar proclamation is then made for the Sheriff of Middlesex, when the alderman counts six horse shoes lying upon the table, and sixty one hob-nails handed in a tray; and the numbers are declared twice. The sticks are thin peeled twigs, tied in a bundle at each end (of course with red tape); the horse-shoes are of

large size, and very old; the hob-nails are supplied fresh every year. By the first ceremony the alderman does suit and service for the tenants of a manor in Shropshire, the chopping of sticks betokening the custom of the tenants supplying their lord with fuel. The counting of the horse-shoes and nails is another suit and service of the owners of a forge in St. Clement Danes, Strand, which formerly belonged to the City, but no longer exists; while, as to the manor in Shropshire, even a century ago no one knew where the lands were situated, nor did the city receive any rents or profits from them. It is in the Court of Exchequer that, on the 9th of November, the oaths are administered to the new Lord Mayor: at the same time the late Lord Mayor renders his accounts, and the Recorder invites the Barons to the banquet at Guildhall.

The chamber in which the Exchequer Court sits differs very little from that of the Queen's Bench, save that it wants the refectory antechamber and its shrivelled Pomona, and that, though of equal size, its interior is less pretentious on the score of architectural display. It is equally thronged with professionals and spectators, and the same respectful silence is in keeping with the same obscurity that pervades the place. Baron South is to-day the deciding judge, and the case which the counsel at the moment is elaborately explaining is one of considerable interest to the tax-paying community. The plaintiff is lessee of a brick-field, which he rents for the purpose of digging the clay and burning the bricks. The assessors of the income-tax have levied upon him the full tax upon the land and the produce of his industry in working it, and he claims a deduction against his landlord in respect of the tax he has paid, on the ground that the landlord derives not only rent, but a royalty on the bricks, and sundry other advantages. The question is a complicated one, is mixed up with a good many stiff covenants and a deal of stiffer clay, and even after all the arguments are gone through, pro and con, the decision, like the plaintiff's instruments of trade, sticks in the mud. The judge, who is wisely given to deliberation, will not pronounce without carefully weighing the matter, and therefore he informs the parties to the suit that he will "take time to consider."

From the Exchequer Court we pass to the next, which is the Court of Common Pleas. This is held in a smaller apartment, and one of much more humble appearance. The lawyers monopolise the whole of the sitting accommodation there is, and the public, who want to see and hear, have to crawl over the high wainscoting in the rear, and catch what they can of the proceedings. The case which is going on is of no great importance, being simply a question of railway charges for the carriage of goods, and consequently the auditors not immediately interested are few; and of those who stroll in, the major part soon stroll out again in search of more exciting entertainment elsewhere.

We may as well state here, that the Court of Exchequer, of Queen's Bench, and of Common Pleas, are also, for the convenience of citizens, held at the Guildhall, in the city, during four specified days of each term.

The above are all the courts of law which we find sitting at Westminster to-day; so we transfer



ourselves to Lincoln's Inn, and to the Court of Chancery, which sits in a chamber under that picturesque little cupola that peeps out among the trees, and forms such a pleasant object in the view from Lincoln's Inn Fields. The Court of Chancery and its puzzling maze of professional purlieus have been with us a favourite lounge any time these twenty years. It is the best locality for observing the physiology of legal life, from the acts and deeds of the Lord Chancellor himself, down to the mad doings of the law students, and of the grand army of quill-drivers enlisted under the baky banners of the law stationers. Here, in times past, we have watched the restless face of Brougham, and listened to his terse and vigorous language, while day after day, and week after week, he got through an amount of work that startled the lawyers out of their old routine.

But to return to the Court. The present Lord Chancellor is on the bench as we enter, and a case of almost general importance is under debate. The villainies of a wholesale swindler, who at this moment is on his way to exile, have defrauded a railway company to the amount of nearly a quarter of a million. The holders of preference shares, conceiving themselves secured by their guarantee, have refused to bear any proportion of the loss, and, suing the company for their dividends, have obtained from the Vice-Chancellor a verdict in their favour. From that decision the company have appealed, and the merits of the question are again under discussion. How the decision will finally rest is not at this moment apparent; there are a good many anxious faces visible in the ranks of spectators; and it is by no means improbable that among them are persons whose income for the next year is dependent upon the fiat of the judge, and who may be hurled into poverty and want by the reversal of the late decree. On the other hand, if the decree is established, the suffering, though individually less, will be more widely diffused, and a still greater number will be stinted in their means and embarrassed in circumstances. Such are the contingencies of one man's villany.

We leave this matter in debate, and proceeding down Chancery Lane, and entering a quiet close on the left-hand side, find admission to the Rolls Court. Here the attendance is small, there being but little accommodation beyond a bare bench for the public. The Master of the Rolls sits alone without any state, and the Attorney-General is also present, engaged in the cause. The question is one concerning the validity of a will; and as we enter, the depositions of certain witnesses, bearing upon the sanity or non-sanity of the testator, are being read over. The matter will not come to a decision to-day. Already the shades of evening are beginning to close upon the proceedings; it is too dark to make out the identity of the statue which stands in a niche in the wall over the head of the Master. The white wigs of the counsel below bob up and down in the gloom, while the faces beneath them have resolved into shadow; we hear the monotonous voice of the advocate as he reads doggedly on; and then there is a low murmur of voices, a rustling of garments, a crunching of legal paper, and the iterated "thud" of the swinging door, as, one after another, the audience depart in silence from the spot. We take these demonstra-

tions as warnings of dismissal, and, thinking we have had enough of the law courts for one day, make our escape before the general break-up.

We shall return to the subject, however, and pay another visit to other quarters before long.

## THE ATLANTIC TELEGRAPH.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.

### CHAPTER I.—THE OCEAN BED.

In the history of all great discoveries, one fact stands prominently forth, and that is, that the pathway of such discoveries has been gradually prepared for them. It would seem to be the order of Providence, that in all affairs of moment the dawn should precede the day, and that no change of vital importance to human interests should be allowed to enter unheralded upon the stage of action.

The history of the Atlantic Telegraph forms no exception to this rule. It is true that to multitudes the great achievement which has linked the Old and the New World together has burst upon them with startling suddenness; but men of thought and men of practical science have been long and confidently expecting this grand consummation as the result of persevering enterprise based upon sound scientific knowledge; and to them this signal event is but the verification of scientific principles, and the fulfilment of expectations which, with their knowledge of natural laws, they could not help entertaining.

In treating briefly the subject of this paper, we shall have to recur to some of those preliminary processes which, for the most part unknown to the general public, have during the last few years been preparing the way for this great triumph of modern civilization. It has been properly said that the idea of an Atlantic Telegraph belongs to nobody, inasmuch as it must have followed naturally from the success of the first signal transmitted through an insulated wire. Doubtless, this is true; for the idea of girdling the whole world with the electric wire was popularly talked of as an eventual possibility soon after the first appearance of the telegraph wires along the lines of railway. How the thing was to be done was the question which it was left to a few wise heads to determine.

In order to lay an electric cable across the Atlantic—a distance something short of two thousand miles—it was necessary, in the first place, to acquire some definite knowledge regarding the bed of the ocean it would have to traverse. Geographers had assumed that the bottom of the sea pretty much resembled in its variations of level the surface of the land. If this were true, and it it should happen that in the depths of the Atlantic there lay a region like that of Norway, of Switzerland, or of the Rocky Mountains of the West, then the idea of laying a continuous cable along such a craggy, peaked, and precipitous bottom would be absurd, and would have to be abandoned. But it chanced (as we are accustomed to say) that at the very time when the electricians and telegraphers were contemplating their great work, and experimenting with batteries and cables—with voltaic currents and magnetic induction—and the various paraphernalia of electric transmission, in

order to ascertain the practical possibilities of their new science—it chanced, just then, that experiments of another kind, but no less essential to their success, were making by men of science in a different walk, and that without any special or immediate reference to the idea of a telegraph.

It is to the success of deep-sea sounding, and to the accurate information thereby obtained, that must be attributed, in great part, the success of deep-sea telegraphs. The American marine led the way in experiments of this kind. It is not many years since the bottom of what sailors call "blue water" was as completely unknown to us as is the interior of any planet of our system. And not only was the nature of the bottom unknown, but also its distance from the surface. The old English and Dutch navigators, it is true, had sounded in various ways, and, entertaining the notion that because their line continued to run out, it had not reached the bottom, they reported fabulous depths even in places now known to be comparatively shallow. Subsequent experience showed that, beyond a certain depth, a line would always continue to run out after the lead had reached the bottom, owing to the action of deep under-currents upon the substance of the line itself; and it further showed that the concussion of the ordinary lead against the bottom could not be communicated along the line when the depth exceeded a few hundred fathoms. These facts once ascertained, all the old records and registers of deep-sea soundings were seen to be erroneous and consequently worthless.

The most ingenious contrivances were now resorted to, to ascertain, if possible, the depth of the sea at any given place. It was thought that by exploding petards at a prescribed depth, and measuring the time that intervened between the explosion and the reverberation from the bottom, the distance would be ascertained; but, alas! when the petards were exploded, at whatever depth, there was no answering echo, and that plan failed. Then, to deep-sea leads were attached hollow cylinders, containing columns of air, which would show by compression the aqueous pressure to which they were subjected. This machine answered well for moderate depths, which could be as well fathomed without it; but at great depths it was shattered by pressure of the water, and came up in fragments. Another plan consisted in sinking a piece of clockwork, for registering the revolutions of a screw, which turned once round at every fathom of its descent. This failed, from the difficulty of getting it down and up. Then the torpedo was proposed, which, exploding at the bottom, should enable the observer to calculate the depth by the rate at which the sound would ascend. Various other devices were had recourse to, but all resulted in the same non-success.

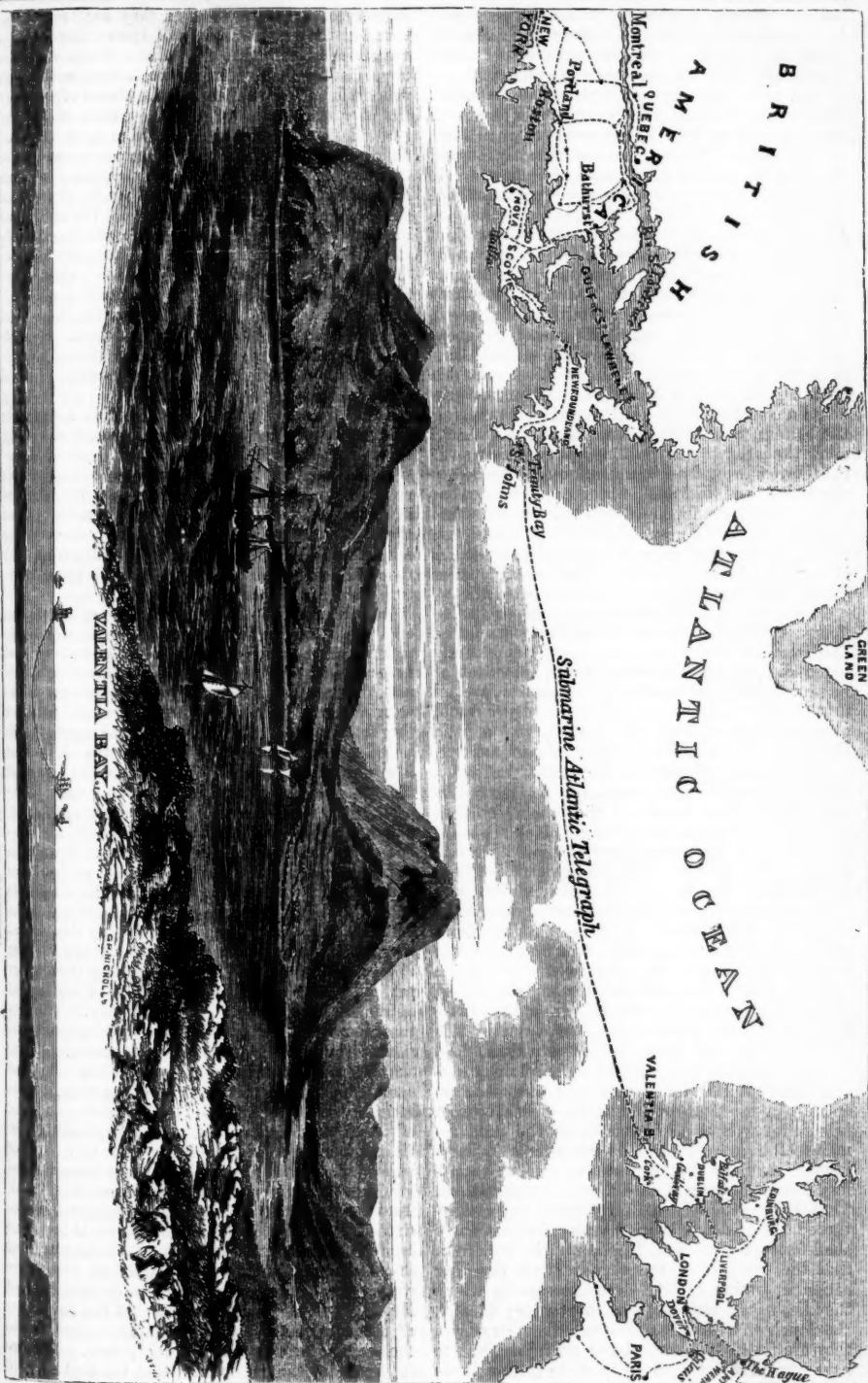
Some one now suggested the use of common twine for a sounding-line, and a cannon ball for a sinker. It was conceived that the ball would sink plump to the bottom, and that then the twine would cease to run out from the reel. This, however, though a step in the right direction, produced only an approximation to the truth. Astounding reports were sent home as to the depths of various seas, ascertained by the new method. Thus Captain Denham, of her Majesty's ship

"Herald," reported bottom in the South Atlantic at the depth of forty-six thousand feet; and Lieutenant Parker, of the United States frigate "Congress," did not reach the bottom with fifty thousand feet! But now it was discovered that even a thin twine, once sunk to a great depth, will run out from the reel (notwithstanding the lead has reached the bottom), as long as there is any left to run. Thus these astounding reports were shown also to be fallacious. The cannon-ball and twine, however, it was ascertained, answered perfectly well to the depth of about a thousand fathoms, at which depth the instant of concussion with the bottom was plainly perceptible; and observers now began to note that, although the twine continued to run off the reel after concussion, it ran now at a regular ratio, under the action of the under-currents, and not at an increasing ratio, as it had done under the action of the gravitating shot. Here, then, were the required data for such calculations as would lead to a knowledge of the true depth of the sea. The calculations—upon which we need not enter here—were made and rules were laid down, by adherence to which navigators are now enabled to ascertain very nearly the actual depth of the ocean in any part of the world.

Efficient means for sounding being now obtained, nearly every vessel sailing into blue water was supplied with them, and soundings, which could be relied upon, were now rapidly registered in almost all latitudes and longitudes of the ocean. By the year 1856, when the Atlantic Telegraph Company had well nigh perfected their machinery, these deep-sea soundings amounted to many thousands. With a view to the laying of the cable, those made in the bed of the Atlantic were examined and compared, and a vast number of additional ones were obtained at the instance of the projectors. The result was the grand discovery—if that can be called a discovery which can never be seen by human eye—that for nearly the whole width of the Atlantic, between Ireland and Newfoundland, there lies, at a depth varying from fifteen hundred to something over two thousand fathoms—or two miles and a fraction—a sort of undulating prairie of table land, free from peaks and precipices and destructive rocks and crags, and which the discoverers have denominated the telegraphic plateau. This plateau is bounded both on the eastern and western shore by a ridge, rising gradually, but somewhat suddenly, about a thousand fathoms, its summit being about six hundred fathoms below the surface, at the distance of 100 or 200 miles from land, and gently shelving upwards towards the coast.

But what is the nature of the bottom surface of this vast plateau, upon which the cable would have to rest? and what is its normal condition? and what are the disturbing influences to which it is subjected? The answers to these questions, vital as they are to the maintenance of electric communication, appeared at first view impossible of attainment. Who was to penetrate the dark caves, ten thousand feet below, and bring up news from that rayless abyss? And yet the answers have been obtained, the requisite knowledge has been brought to light, and we know now, from evidence not to be controverted, that there is no





natural obstacle in the way of human enterprise in this direction, but that Nature holds out her hand, as it were, beckoning encouragingly, and bountifully offers the conditions of success.

And note here another remarkable "chance." Before these deep-sea soundings, nothing had ever been brought up from a greater depth than three or four hundred fathoms, and consequently, beyond that depth, nothing was known of the nature of the bottom. And for a long time after these deep soundings were obtainable, nothing could be brought up, because neither the shot nor much of the twine used could be recovered, but had to be sacrificed at every cast. But now, the men of science—geologists, naturalists, and microscopists especially—knowing that the depths were fathomed, began eagerly to demand specimens of the deep-sea bottom, without special reference, be it understood, to telegraphic communication. At this crisis Mr. Brooke, an American midshipman, proposed a contrivance by which the shot, on striking the bottom, would detach itself from the line, and allow the latter to be drawn up with a specimen of the bottom, contained in a goose-quill attached to the twine, and inclosed in a rod perforating the shot. The shot slipped off the rod the instant it touched the bottom, and the line was wound up; and the contents of the quill, after lying for scores of centuries in darkness, could be made to answer all the questions above propounded, and more.

It was quite in character that a goose-quill—that venerable enlightener of mankind—should be the medium of the new revelations; and surely never did goose-quill convey more important or more welcome intelligence. To a common eye, all that the quill brought up, sink it where you would over the area of that vast plateau, was a little modicum of soft silt or deep-grey mud, so fine, impalpable, and slippery to the touch, that not a particle of grit could be detected by the most delicate finger. But what was the tale which that soft mud told to the microscope? Mark the story which it told, in accents perfectly intelligible to the scientific mind:—"The bottom of the Atlantic," it said, "is one vast graveyard, rayless, motionless, and serene: cold, calm, and quiet, it lies in eternal rest. Of the myriads of radiant hues which gem the upper waters, none ever penetrate here; of the storms that vex the surface, of the currents that sweep athwart the middle region, not even a murmur or a throb ever reaches these tranquil abodes; death is sole monarch in this sightless deep, and in one universal pall the dead cover up the dead." For it was found upon examination that this impalpable mud was made up entirely in most places, and nearly so in others, of infinite myriads of calcareous shells, the dead remains of living creatures, which, after enjoying a brief existence in the upper waters, died, and sinking, deposited their minute forms on the bottom. That this bottom is perfectly quiet and undisturbed, the evidence is irrefragable, because these shell-forms are so infinitesimally thin and frail, that the presence of the very gentlest abrading action operating on the dense masses in which they lie, would reduce them to powder; in fact, the touch of a feather will crush them; and yet they are found to have suffered no injury, but to have remained for ages complete in their delicate

entirety of structure, as when they lived and waned in the crested billows of the surface. It is ascertained, then, that the bottom of the Atlantic is covered, probably many fathoms deep, with these minute forms; and that, like the flakes of snow in a winter storm, the bodies of these little creatures, invisible to the naked eye, are, from hour to hour and from age to age, falling in one ceaseless shower over the deep sea bottom, and mantling, in their cold and quiet shroud, the spoils of the strife and the ravage of the tempest above. We said that in most places this grey mud was made up entirely of these little dead creatures; in other places, however, these microscopic "bodies of the slain" are found mingled with what is termed "sea-dust." This is for the most part earthy matter, deposited by winds blowing across sandy deserts or regions of dried-up swamps, and, in the northern Atlantic especially, of particles of minute scorice ejected from volcanoes.

Here, then, is the very best possible receptacle for the Atlantic cable, which the most exacting experimenter could have demanded. Once deposited on this plateau, it sinks gently into the soft mud, or, if it does not sink, will soon be covered in by the quiet drift that is ever descending; and there it is consigned to the same conservative conditions which have preserved uninjured, for thousands of years, the myriads of fragile structures which will form its bed.

A word on the cable itself. The construction of a cable which must necessarily be between two and three thousand miles in length, was a novel undertaking, and presented difficulties which had not hitherto been dealt with. If the new cable were made of the size of those used to connect England with the continent of Europe—which weigh several tons to the mile—it was plain that it would require a fleet to carry it out to sea, and that the risk of failure in laying it would be in proportion to the number of vessels employed. Further, it was known by this time, from dear-bought experience, that weight and mass were in themselves elements of failure, and that lightness and flexibility were the two qualities desirable above all others to insure its safe deposition at the bottom. For these reasons it was that the Atlantic cable was made so small (less than three-fourths of an inch in diameter) as to weigh less than a ton per mile, and so flexible as to allow of coiling in extremely small curves without injury. The extraordinary flexibility is obtained by a minute division of the metallic parts of its structure. Thus, the internal conducting core is formed of seven small copper wires, firmly twisted together. This is protected by a coating of gutta percha, outside, of which there is another of hemp, saturated in oil and tar; and this, again, is clad in a coat of wire mail, formed of eighteen strands, each containing seven wires. Fears were entertained that, from the smallness of the core—which is but the sixteenth of an inch in diameter—it would be found impossible to transmit effective shocks throughout so enormous a length. All doubts on this score were, however, set at rest by the experiments of Mr. Whitehouse, which showed that the smallness of the core was a positive advantage, tending to the economization of the electric power. We are far from supposing, however, that the best form of

cable has yet been manufactured. It is possible that much less weight and more flexibility will be obtained, and that electric lines will ultimately be laid down which, as to size, will better compare with the "sounding twine" than with the "cable" of the navigator.

## THE SCHOOLMASTER AND HIS SON.

A MEMOIR OF THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR.

### CHAPTER IX.—WAR AND PESTILENCE.

"War comes but to destroy—Peace comes to give us joy;  
War brings us want and dread—Peace brings us wine and bread;  
War comes with fire and blood—Peace comes with heart and good;  
War turns all minds to sadness—Peace turns them all to gladness;  
War is of Satan's leaven, but Peace a gift from Heaven."

THE next seven years were years of sorrow, but not of the same bitter sorrow as that caused by Valentine's conduct; for I felt these troubles to be the chastening of the Lord, whereas the others seemed to be the working of Satan. War still continued, accompanied and followed by all its woes. The Swedes were our allies, and meant to protect us and our church. Their army was kept in strict discipline as long as the good king Gustavus Adolphus lived, but even he could not prevent idle camp followers doing much mischief in the towns and villages; and, on the other hand, the Imperial troops plundered and burned wherever they marched.

In the year 1634, the Swedes were defeated at Nordlingen, and the Imperial troops overran all our part of the country. We heard that the Emperor Ferdinand was coming to make Sommerhausen his head-quarters, and many of us thought we had best leave the town and take refuge in some of the neighbouring villages, knowing that we should be turned out of our houses to make room for the soldiers. I was amongst the number of the fugitives, together with my wife and my three children. We all gathered outside the gate, our old pastor amongst us. He prayed for us, and then we joined in a hymn:—

"Our lives, oh Lord, are in thy hands;  
Our foe may have our goods and lands;  
They cannot take from us thy grace,  
Nor hinder us to seek thy face.  
Whate'er we do, where'er we flee,  
Lord, let us not depart from thee."

Having sung these words, we all separated to go our different ways. I found a home with a friend at Etwashausen, and remained there four weeks, when, having heard that the Imperialists had left the province, and that most of the inhabitants had returned to Sommerhausen, I and my family set out on our return.

On reaching Steinbach, we observed some men in the burial-ground, digging what seemed an enormous grave. They looked thin and weak; and, as if unable to continue long at work, one took up the spade while another rested after a few minutes' digging. On first perceiving us, they greeted us, and then sorrowfully told us that we had come home at an unhappy time. True, they said, the troops had evacuated the town, but they had left the pestilence behind them. Some sick soldiers had remained, and their sickness had

infected the townsfolk. Many had died already. They themselves had not taken the sickness, but were weak and exhausted from fatigue, attending on the sick, and the want of nourishing food, for there were scarcely any provisions to be had. So many were now lying dead that they were trying to make one grave for all. The old gravedigger himself was dead.

Having some provisions with us, I shared them with these poor fellows, and went on to our home. The men had not exaggerated the ravages of the pestilence; there was not a house where there were not some dead. Our old pastor, the commissary, and I cannot tell how many old friends, were already gone. I now first became acquainted with this fearful form of death. As deacon of the church, I had often joined a funeral procession to the burial-place, and thought it sad to see a widow follow the coffin of her husband, or children weeping for the mother taken from them by death, or parents lamenting their only child; but what was that to seeing the dead carried in numbers to the grave, and no lamentation following; no bell tolled for them, no coffin to shroud them—buried all together in one grave? At last, so many were carried off by the pestilence, that scarcely enough were left to attend to the sick. While much Christian kindness was called forth by this trial, it also showed what the heart of man is by nature; it disclosed an immense amount of selfishness, for many proved by their conduct that their hearts were hard and unfeeling, denying to the poor dying creatures the comforts they could have given them, and even stealing away from them what others had spared for them, without reflecting that their own turn might come next.

My house, also, was sorely visited. My wife and my two daughters sickened on the same day. The children died in the evening. My wife lasted a few hours longer, but she ceased to recognise me, and seldom uttered a word, except when she called in a loud voice, "Oh, Valentine! oh, my son! my son!" Towards the break of day, however, she suddenly sat up in the bed, looked up with a glowing countenance, as if she beheld something that delighted her, and, stretching out her arms, exclaimed: "The Bridgroom comes! I go to meet the Lord!" and then sank back on her pillow, and ceased to breathe. Thus our union of four-and-twenty years was severed. I had spent the night, with my Johan, going from one bedside to another, but I felt as if walking in my sleep; and when daylight came, my son and I, assisted by Hans Ebeling, dug a grave, close to that of old Guy, where, wrapping each corpse in white linen, we buried them with tears and prayers. When we had covered the loved remains with earth, our neighbour the carpenter approached, with a simple wooden monument he had made, and said, "Schoolmaster! this is to mark your wife's grave. She adorned the doctrine of Christ by her walk in life, and I hope you will allow this to ornament her grave." I could but bless him for his loving sympathy.

Deprived thus of my wife and daughters, I still had Johan; and in the hope that the Lord would bless my efforts to save him, I determined to send him to Kitzingen at once. As I was bidding him farewell, the boy pointed to a rainbow that was



visible, and said, "Oh! dear father, it looks like a beautiful bridge from this to the happy home of mother and sisters. I should like to go there, if you were to come with me, father."

"Be it as God wills, my boy," I replied. "You are now my only comfort on earth;" and, recommending him to the grace of God, I sent him off. My friend at Kitzingen hospitably received my son; but it was not very long before he wrote to say that the pestilence had appeared there too, and that he thought it best to send Johan back to me. As the road over the hills was beset with soldiers, he thought it best to send him by the river, and as he knew the skipper of a boat coming up the Maine in the course of a week, he would intrust Johan to his care, to drop him at Sommerhausen, on his way to Wurzburg.

The day I expected the boat I went out to the river to meet it. I expected to see my boy on the deck, looking out for his father; but he was not there, and when I inquired for him, the skipper pointed to a little boat chained on to the end of the large one, and covered with a cloth. Under that cloth lay my Johan. I inquired whether he was asleep. The man shook his head, and at last found words to say, "He is dead." The friend to whom I had sent him was one of the first victims of the pestilence, and before he died had made the skipper promise to bring my boy to me. He had died almost immediately after, but, before his death, had so entreated the man to bring his body to me, to be buried beside his mother and sisters, that he could not refuse to do so. I rewarded the man who had thus attended to my son's wishes, as amply as I could afford, and, taking my dead child in my arms, I carried him home. Every man I met took off his hat and stood still while I passed. I laid my child's body on the bed, dressed it for the grave, and then sat down at his feet without shedding a tear. In the evening, Hans Ebeling and three others came to me, and we bore the coffin to the grave. Several young persons—boys and girls who had known and loved my Johan—followed the coffin—all, I think, who had escaped the pestilence.

My home was now desolate; I stood alone in the world. Often and often I longed to depart, and then, again, I almost wished to live, thinking it might be the Lord's will to give me Valentine again; and I prayed for resignation and for patience, and the word of God, from the lips of some of my friends, calmed me wonderfully.

#### A KNOWLEDGE OF NATURAL HISTORY PRACTICALLY USEFUL.

APART from the pure enjoyment felt in the study of natural history—and which is indeed its own reward—there is often much advantage to be reaped from even such a slight acquaintance with it as may meet the requirements of those who regard things merely in a utilitarian point of view. In proof of this statement we will adduce two remarkable instances: the first is taken from Mr. Southey's "History of Brazil," where, describing the perilous situation of Cabeza de Vaca on his voyage to Brazil, he relates in what a remarkable manner he owed his escape from shipwreck to a

small insect. When the voyagers had crossed the line, the supply of water was inquired into, and it was found that of one hundred casks there remained but three for four hundred men and thirty horses. Upon this, the Adelantado gave orders to make for the nearest land. Three days they stood towards it.

A soldier, who set out in ill health, had brought a grillo, or ground cricket, with him from Cadiz, thinking to be amused by the insect's voice; but it had been silent the whole way, to his no little disappointment. Now, on the morning of the fourth day, the grillo began to ring his shrill rattle, scenting, as was immediately supposed, the land. Such was the miserable watch which had been kept, that, when looking out at this warning, they perceived high rocks within bowshot, against which, had it not been for the insect, they must inevitably have been lost: they had only just time to drop anchor. From hence they coasted along, the grillo singing every night as if it had been on shore, till they reached the island of St. Catalina.

A still more striking incident is that we next proceed to relate. During a violent storm in the month of November, 1821, a vessel passing through the English Channel was driven on shore near Beachy Head. The whole of the crew being washed overboard, four only escaped immediate death, to be delivered, as they thought, to one more lingering and equally inevitable; i.e., having in the darkness of the night been cast upon the breakers, they found, when they had climbed up the highest of those low rocks, that the waves were rapidly encroaching on their asylum. To their terror, they apprehended that when the tide should be at its height, the whole range would be entirely covered with water. The darkness of the night prevented anything being visible beyond the spot upon which they stood, and which was continually decreasing by the successive encroachments of each returning wave. The violence of the storm left no hope that their feeble voices, even if raised to the utmost, could be heard on shore; and they knew that, amidst the howling of the blast, their cries could reach no other ear than that of God. What human arm could give assistance in such a situation? Even if their distress were known, how vain the help of man! Their doom seemed inevitable, for they had climbed to the highest point; and already the roaring waters following them, flung over their devoted heads the foremost waves as heralds of their approaching destruction.

In this extremity, the unhappy men debated whether they should throw themselves upon the mercy of the waves, hoping to be cast upon some higher ground, and thinking that a better alternative than to await a lingering death. They were about to do so, when suddenly one of them in his agony grasped a weed, which, even wet as it was, he well knew, as the lightning's sudden flash afforded a momentary glare, was not a fungus, but a root of samphire, and he instantly recollected that this plant never grows under water. This, then, became more than an olive branch of peace—a messenger of mercy. By it they knew that He who alone can calm the raging of the seas, at whose voice alone the winds and the waves are still, had placed his landmark here; and by this

sign they were assured that he had said to the wild waste of waters, "Hitherto shalt thou come, and no farther." Trusting to this happy omen, they remained stationary during the remainder of that dreadful night; and in the morning they were seen from the cliffs above, and conveyed in safety to the shore.

In another point of view, an acquaintance with the facts of natural history is very useful. We all know how much mischief has been occasioned by what are called "vulgar errors" with reference to this subject. The ignorant have suffered agonies from superstitious fears, which a mere smattering of such knowledge would have sufficed to "scatter to the winds." A very curious example in point recurs to our memory. The great naturalist Reaumur informs us that in the beginning of July, 1608, the suburbs of Aix la Chapelle, and a considerable extent of country round it, were covered with what appeared to be a shower of blood. Great was the consternation of the inhabitants. High and low agreed in attributing this awful appearance to the powers of darkness, and in regarding it as the prognostic of some terrible disaster. Fear and prejudice were taking deep root, and might probably have occasioned fatal results upon some weak minds, had not M. Peiresc, a celebrated philosopher of that place, been a student of entomology. A chrysalis, which he had preserved in his cabinet, revealed to him the secret of this mysterious shower. Hearing a fluttering, which told him his insect had arrived at its perfect state, he opened the box in which he had kept it. The animal flew out, and left behind it a red spot. The hint sufficed; he immediately compared this with the spots of the bloody rain, and found they were alike. At the same time he observed there was a prodigious number of butterflies flying about, and on careful examination he found that the red drops were not to be found on the tiles, nor even on the upper surface of the stones, but chiefly in cavities and places where the rain could not easily come. Thus did the observer of nature dispel the ignorant fears and terror which a natural phenomenon had caused.

The same author relates that a gentleman's gardener was thrown into a terrible fright by finding some of the curious cases formed by the leaf-cutter bees, in which they deposit their eggs. Unable to account for such mysterious-looking objects, the man conceived them to be the product of witchcraft, portending some dreadful misfortune. By the advice of the priest of his parish, he even took a journey from Rouen to Paris, to show them to his master; but he, happily, having more sense than the man, showed them to M. Nollet, an eminent naturalist, who, speedily opening one of the cases, pointed out the grub it contained, and sent the poor gardener away with a light heart, relieved from all his apprehensions.

This last incident reminds us that, some six months since, we received in a penny envelope a small box containing two little triangular-shaped seeds. A note which accompanied them said that they were the seeds of a euphobia from Mexico, and that they were given to moving or jumping of their own accord. It was added: "There are many explanations of the cause; but I like best that of a learned lady friend of mine, who declares

that they were blessed by the pope on St. Vitus's Day!" And, sure enough, the seeds performed their part to admiration, jumping about with so much agility that, if placed on a sheet of paper, they presently hopped beyond its limits. When put into the hand, they startled one by the sudden jerk they ever and anon gave; and most puzzling things they were. The cause was a very simple one after all: no other than the existence of a small grub within the seed, the egg of which some insect must have deposited there when it was in an immature state. What terrible alarm would these jumping seeds have occasioned to the ignorant people of whom we have just been speaking!

Much more might be said to show that the students of natural history are really conferring on society a benefit incalculably greater than many who assume the privilege of despising their pursuit.

## INTRODUCTORY LESSONS ON THE MIND.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"LESSONS ON REASONING," AND ON "MORALS."

### LESSON VIII.

#### SECT. 1.—MEN DIFFER IN THEIR MENTAL POWERS.

THERE are great differences, as has been already said, between different persons with respect to their mental faculties. And so there are also in their bodily senses. One man has a better sight or better hearing than another. But there are some things which, at the first glance, may appear to depend entirely on the senses, but which, on closer examination, will be found to depend entirely on some peculiar mental power distinct from the senses, and probably connected with certain portions of the Brain.

#### EAR FOR MUSIC.

Thus, what is commonly called an "Ear for Music" might be supposed to depend entirely—as the name seems to imply—on the *Sense of Hearing*. And some of those who have very little of it believe this to be the case, supposing that their Hearing is so far defective that they cannot distinguish as well as others can one sound from another. Yet these same persons will be found to distinguish perfectly well the different voices—nay, even the sound of the footsteps—of a very great number of persons, and to know one of their friends by his voice when he speaks but a single word. Now the distinction between the voices of different persons (and there can hardly be found any two that are completely alike) is so delicate that no words can fully describe it. But the Musical Faculty, though of course it is connected with Hearing, seems to be clearly something distinct from it, and not to depend merely on that sense, and on the perfection of the real literal ear.

#### SECT. 2.—MENTAL POWERS CONNECTED WITH SIGHT.

Again, although it is by the eye that colours are perceived, there are some persons who have eyes very good in all other respects, but who cannot perceive colour. They only see lighter and darker shades, just as we do in a Print or a Pencil-drawing. And some, who have less of this kind of defect, though they perceive some colours, cannot perceive all. Generally, it is Green in which they chiefly fail. Some of them cannot distinguish Green from Red; and to others Green and Brown appear quite alike. And among persons who do distinguish colours, there are some who greatly exceed others in what is called "an Eye for

Colour"—a delicate perception of the smallest shades of difference.

Certain portions of the Brain are supposed, by many eminent Physiologists, to be seats of the Musical Faculty, and of the power of perceiving colour. And it does certainly appear at least very probable that these depend on something distinct from the ear and the eye.

Then, again, there are persons who possess, in a greater or less degree, what is called an "Even Eye:" a power of perceiving readily and exactly when any object leans out of the perpendicular, even but a very little; while other persons, whose eye-sight is generally good, do not perceive this. And some, again, have what is called a good eye for *Form*, and learn to draw figures correctly; while others, with eyes and with hands just as perfectly formed, can hardly be taught to draw at all.

#### SECT. 3.—FACULTIES CONNECTED WITH BODILY ACTIONS.

Whether it be true (as some eminent Physiologists maintain), that these powers—and also the rest of our Faculties and Propensities—are connected with certain distinct portions of the Brain, is a question not to be treated of here. But certainly it does appear that several powers which, in common language, seem to be referred entirely to the Eye and the Hand, do in reality depend more on some qualities of the Hand than on the external Organs. Some years ago, a lady of the name of Beffin exhibited publicly her truly wonderful performances. She was born without arms or legs, having only in their place short stumps. Yet she performed the works of the most accomplished woman—better than most; and was what would have been called, if she had been formed like other people, uncommonly *handy*. She threaded her needle with her mouth, and used it in the most delicate embroidery, as well, and as quickly, as the best needle-women. She wrote well and rapidly; and she supported herself by painting; using, in all these works, no implements different from the ordinary ones.

#### SECT. 4.—FACULTY OF PLACE.

Some persons, again, possess, in a much greater degree than others that have equally good eyes, the power of observing and remembering *places*, so that they find their way in a manner which seems to those deficient in that power, quite wonderful. Most savages possess this faculty in a higher degree than civilized men; chiefly, perhaps, from their having been led carefully to cultivate it from their childhood, on account of their roving kind of life; and the degree in which many brutes possess this faculty is most marvellous. In some of them, indeed, the power of finding their way seems to be something different, not only in degree, but in kind, from anything possessed by Man, and altogether unaccountable; for Dogs and other Brutes have often been known to find their way home, we cannot tell how, from distant places, to which they had been carried by Sea; travelling in the right direction over a country which they had never seen at all. And birds of passage are directed, by some instinct which we cannot at all understand, to take their course in the right direction through the air.

### LESSON IX.

#### SECT. 1.—NUMBER.

The Faculty of *Number*, again, seems to be wholly wanting in Brutes, and very deficient in Savages; and among civilized men it is possessed in very different degrees by different persons. Some count very readily, and notice and correctly remember the number of any objects, and easily learn to calculate; while

others have much less aptitude for all this; and Savages can seldom count correctly beyond five. Indeed, some of them are said to have no word in their language for any number beyond four. As for the Brutes, they seem to have no notion at all of Number. A cat knows each one of her kittens singly, but seems to have no notion of how many there are in the litter; and if one of them be taken away in her absence, she does not seem to miss it; and if you remove them all from the nest, and she finds them and brings them back one by one, when she has replaced them all, she will not be aware that she has done so, but will continue to search for another. A bird, indeed, will go on laying eggs, if some of them be taken away before she begins to sit. She seems to have a perception, generally, of a *large* or a *small quantity*—of the nest being full or half empty—but no distinct notion of number.

This deficiency in the Brute-mind seems to depend on the same cause as that noticed above—their incapacity for a process of *Reasoning*. The power of *Abstraction* is wanting in them, without which no distinct notion of Numbers can be found, nor can Reasoning be carried on.

Abstraction is (as has been explained in the "Lessons on Reasoning," Less, 7, sect. 4) that process of mind by which we are enabled to *generalize*—that is, refer several individual things to a Class, and give them a name, a common name [or general name], which denotes that Class. When, in contemplating several objects that *agree* [are *alike*] in some point, we *draw off* [abstract], and consider separately that point of agreement alone, disregarding anything wherein they may differ, and the separate existence of each of them as an individual, we can then designate all or any of them by a *common term*, applicable to them only in respect of that which is "common" to them all, and which expresses nothing that can distinguish them from each other.

#### SECT. 2.—SAMENESS.

And the words "*Same*," *One-and-the-same*," and "*Identical*" are often applied when we are speaking of several things that are *similar*, and altogether in reference to that similarity. Thus we speak of the Cedars on Mount Lebanon being the *same* as what King Solomon used in building the Temple. And if you borrow a shilling from any one and repay him with a shilling, you are said to repay the *same* money, though it is not the *same* individual coin, but a *similar* one, of equal value.

In all such cases the words *One* and *Same* are used, because one single *name* or *description* will apply to each of the things thus classed together. And it is important to distinguish in the mind this sameness—figuratively so called—from real, literal Singleness and Identity. Whatever this latter does consist in, it is plain it has nothing to do with *similarity*; for when you speak of a man as being the *same* person who was born in such and such a place, many years ago, you do not mean that he has, now, any *resemblance* to an infant.

#### SECT. 3.—GENERALIZING.

The *generalizing* process above noticed is required in order to enable us to *count*, or to form any notion of Number. For, suppose you see in a field a black horse, and a bay, and a grey; in order to reckon them together, you must lay aside all thought of their different colours, and of every distinction between one and another; and you must abstract the one circumstance in which they resemble each other; and then you can call them *three*; namely, *three horses*. And suppose there are half a dozen *cows* in the same field, in



like manner you can speak of them as six, only by disregarding the distinctions between one cow and another. And if you go on to lay aside the consideration of the differences between a cow and a horse, and abstract that wherein they agree, you can then say that there are nine *beasts* in the field. And thus you may proceed with other things. But you can go still further, and speak of numbers without specifying any kind of objects at all: without saying "number of *what*;" as when you say that "3 and 6 make nine:" which means that "three *things* added to six things (of whatever kind) make nine things." This is carrying on the process of Abstraction still further; "thing" being a term much *more* general than *beast*; as that is more general than horse or cow. And this is the term that is always understood whenever we speak of Numbers simply as numbers. When you say, for instance, that 100 is twice 50, you mean that 100 of whatever things is double of 50 of those same things.

#### SECT. 4.—ODD AND SINGULAR.

It is a thing so familiar to our mind, that in order to reckon together several things so as to form a notion of their *number*, we must disregard all their *differences* from each other, and that when (reversing this process) we separate them, and consider each *singly*—all this is so familiar to our mind, that it affects our ordinary language. For the words "*odd*" and "*singular*," which mean, originally, only "standing alone," have come to denote whatever is very *unlike* other things.

#### HUMILITY ONE SIGN OF GREATNESS.

I BELIEVE the first test of a truly great man is his humility. By humility I do not mean doubt of his own power, or hesitation in speaking his opinions; but a right understanding of the relation between what he can do and say, and the rest of the world's sayings and doings. All great men not only know their business, but know usually that they know it; and are not only right in their main opinions, but they usually know that they are right in them; only they do not think much of themselves on that account. Arnolfo knows that he can build a good dome at Florence; Albert Durer writes calmly to one who had found fault with his works, "It cannot be better done;" Sir Isaac Newton knows that he has worked out a problem or two that would have puzzled any one else; only they do not, therefore, expect their fellow-men to fall down and worship them; they have a curious undersense of powerlessness, feeling that the greatness is not in them but *through* them; that they could not do or be anything else than God made them. And they see something divine and God-made in every other man they meet. The slightest manifestation of jealousy or self-complacency is enough to mark a second-rate character of the intellect.—*Ruskin*.

#### THE PERIL OF INDECISION.

WHAT is it you are wavering between? Dust and ashes, and "a crown of glory that fadeth not away." On your right hand is Christ, heaven, and an immortality of blessedness; on your left hand is disobedience, rebellion, discontent, remorse, despair, and an immortality of misery. Between these you are halting. While you halt, the "gulf" is forming that will soon be "fixed;" the character is deepening that will soon be stereotyped for ever. Indecision becomes decision; you decide for hell while you waver about

heaven. And how imminent the peril of those that are wavering! It is now, or it is never; it is here, or it is nowhere. The door will soon be shut that can never be opened, and the dark abyss set that never can be crossed. O that I could bring home to every halting man that position which, as a sinner without Christ, he occupies!

Some will remember a touching tale, mentioned in one of the little periodicals published for the labouring classes. It was published some years ago. It narrates how a poor man, on one of the rocky coasts of our country, who got his bread by gathering sea-fowls' eggs, went out one morning on his perilous adventure, and, looking down a terrific steep, he saw midway a ledge, abutting from the rock, covered with a cluster of the sea-fowls' nests. He fastened his rope to a tree above the cliff, and lowered himself cautiously down till he stood upon the ledge. In his eagerness to grasp the spoil, he unwittingly dropped the noose of the rope by which he had descended, and it swung, as it appeared, far beyond his reach; and there he stood on that narrow ledge, above him a fearful height he had no hope to scale, below him a terrific precipice, with the sea dashing at its base. It was a moment of unutterable anguish. In intensity of dismay, by a desperate effort he sprang upward. It pleased God he should grasp the rope. He drew himself up to the summit, trembling with transport and terror. Every one of us can realize the peril of that fellow-creature. But how akin to this, but intensely more awful, the condition of every waverer! He stands on the narrow ledge of life; above him is the terrific mountain of his guilt, that he has no power in himself to scale; below him is the fearful abyss of death, with the death that never dies. There is but the breath in his nostrils between him and the bottomless pit. O awake, fellow sinner—awake to thy true and perilous position! It is late, but not too late. There is yet the rope that hangs from the cross of Jesus, or rather from the throne of God; that rope can lift thee over the mount of thy guilt, and land thee on the brink of the shore of eternal safety and peace. O leap, and live! "Fly for refuge, and lay hold of the hope set before you," and as God liveth, your soul shall live. He is "slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy." "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of a sinner, but rather that he should repent and live. Turn ye, turn ye; for why will ye die?"—*Rev. Hugh Stowell*.

#### A SHORT METHOD WITH AN INFIDEL.

THE "Christian Index" gives an incident of travel which illustrates the value of Christian consistency on all occasions. The writer of the anecdote was one of several gentlemen, among them a lawyer and an editor of some note, who were quartered for a night in the same room at a country tavern. Before retiring to rest, the editor introduced a dispute on the subject of religion, by avowing his disbelief in and contempt for its doctrines. He indulged in a lengthened display of his bitterness and folly, with but an occasional reply from the lawyer, until the latter commenced preparations for rest, by withdrawing quietly to his bedside and kneeling in prayer. An instant hush fell on the scene. An audible rebuke from heaven could scarcely, it seemed, have interrupted the current of blasphemy with more surprise and awe. Little was said further; but the retiring of that company of travellers was a season of speechless solemnity long to be remembered by every one of them.

## Varieties.

**THE TRAINING OF BRAZILIAN DAUGHTERS.**—In eight cases out of ten, the Brazilian father thinks that he has done his duty when he has sent his daughter for a few years to a fashionable school kept by some foreigner; at thirteen or fourteen he withdraws her, believing that her education is finished. If wealthy, she is already arranged for life, and in a little time the father presents to his daughter some friend of his own, with the soothing remark, "*Minha filha*,"—"This is your future husband." A view of diamonds, laces, and carriages dazzles her mental vision: she stifles the small portion of heart that may be left her, and quietly acquiesces in her father's arrangement, probably consoling herself with the reflection that it will not be requisite to give her undivided affections to the affianced companion—that near resemblance of her grandfather. Now the parents are at ease. The care of watching that ambitious young lady devolves on her husband, and thenceforth he alone is responsible. He, poor man, having a just sense of his own unfitness for such a task, places some antique relative as a duenna to the young bride, and then goes to his counting-house in happy serenity. At night he returns and takes her to the opera, there to exhibit the prize that his *crutos* have gained, and to receive the congratulations of his friends upon the lovely young wife that he has bought. "Tis an old tale," and Brazil has not a monopoly of such marriages. Then the same round of errors recommences; her children feel the effects of the very system that has rendered the mother a frivolous and outward being. She sallies forth on Sandays or festas arm-in-arm with her husband or brother, the children preceding, according to age, all dressed in black silk, with neck and arms generally bare, or at most a light scarf or cape thrown over them, their luxuriant hair beautifully arranged and ornamented, and sometimes covered with a black lace veil; prayer-book in hand they thus proceed to church. Mass being duly gone through, and a contribution dropped into the poor-box, they return home in the same order as before.—*Brazil and the Brazilians.*

**A TRAVELLERS' BUNGALOW IN INDIA.**—A travellers' bungalow is one of the most wretched-looking abodes when no visitor is there. In each room there is a table; if it has three legs and a half, it is well. Should the chairs have backs, seats, and their usual number of legs, the traveller who brings none with him may congratulate himself. The small narrow cots are skeletons of beds, denuded of all furniture except dirty mosquito curtains, with very open holes in them, large enough to admit a dragon-fly. Persons here travel with as many comforts as they can. Linen they must bring; and if they do not bring a cook, they will often have to put up with native fare. It is frequently the case that travellers arrive at these wretched resting-places, which are scarcely better than *durumselas* (native inns), who are far from affluent, and very ill, trying to "get home" before it is too late; and what inconveniences have such invalids to encounter, when (their few comforts, perhaps, detained on the road) they find an empty, dismantled chamber, a mud floor, a bed without furniture, and food from which the healthiest would turn with disrelish. People in Europe talk of the "luxuries of the East." It is but little known how much the wife of a subaltern in the Indian army undergoes, when she travels with young children, on arriving at one of these bungalows. I often think of the strange and melancholy scenes which have occurred in such places.—*Lady Falkland's "Chow-Chow."*

**"SUNDAY CORN."**—*Infidel Vain Boasting.*—An American infidel, boasting in a published letter that he had raised two acres of "Sunday corn," which he intended to devote to the purchase of infidel books, adds: "All the work done on it was done on Sunday, and it will yield some seventy bushels to the acre; so I don't see but that Nature or Providence has smiled upon my Sunday work, however the priests or the Bible may say that work done on that day never prospers. My corn tells another story." To this the editor of an agricultural paper replies: "If the author of this shallow nonsense had read the Bible half as much as he has the works of its opponents, he would have

known that the great Ruler of the universe does not always square up his accounts with mankind in the month of October."

**CAFFRE VIRTUES.**—The English call *Satan* black, the Hottentots call him white. The Caffres themselves, though not generally black, admire that complexion; there has been a man among them so fair that no girl would marry him. One of the titles of the Zulu King is, "You that are black." To be black, then, is to possess a physical virtue. Still more important is it to be corpulent. Fatness is a sign of good feeding and good breeding, and, therefore, of high social position; besides, as a Caffre said to Mr. Shooter, in the event of a famine, a fat person might survive till the next season, while a lean one would surely die. A very obese noble was once condemned in Zulu to be hurled from a precipice; being padded by nature, he broke no bones, whereas, had he been slim, his whole anatomy must have been dislocated.—"*The Caffres of Natal and the Zulu Country*," by the Rev. Joseph Shooter.

**IMPORTANCE OF VENTILATION.**—In regard to the transmission of fever, a physician says that when the infection is not destroyed or dispersed in the sick-room, it attaches itself and adheres with great tenacity to all articles of furniture—chairs, tables, drawers, etc.—nestling in their innumerable pores; and unless these articles be scrubbed with a solution of chloride of lime, or exposed to a strong heat, or a free current of air, for several hours, it may again become evolved, more virulently than at first, after the lapse of weeks. But it chiefly adheres to cotton and woollen materials. The patient's body-clothes and blankets become saturated with it, like a sponge with water; and, in airing these materials, a mere passing breeze is not always sufficient to carry it away.

**EXAMPLES OF LONGEVITY.**—Haller, who has collected the greatest number of examples of longevity, says that he has found more than

1000	who have lived from	100	to	110	years
60	"	"	110	to	120 "
29	"	"	120	to	130 "
15	"	"	130	to	140 "
6	"	"	140	to	160 "

and 1 who reached the astonishing age of 169 years. It has been remarked that England, Sweden, and Denmark have produced the greatest number of long-lived persons. "*Monthly Mirror*," November, 1800.

**CURIOSITIES OF LIGHTNING.**—Lightning presents many curiosities, among which are what is termed "fulgurites," or tubes, which the lightning constructs when it falls upon a silicious spot, by fusing the sand. They may be called casts of thunderbolts. In some hillocks of sand in Cumberland, these hollow tubes have been found from one-fifteenth to two inches in diameter, tapering, perhaps, to a mere point. The entire extent of the tubes produced in this manner may be thirty feet, but they usually separate into numerous branches, and have the appearance of the skeleton of an inverted tree. They are lined with glass, as smooth and perfect as if it had been made in a glass-house, instead of by the simple and instantaneous operations of a power of nature.

**CHEAP DINING IN PARIS.**—In Paris a man may dine for twopence. In the neighbourhood of the *Marché des Innocents* there is a certain enterprising Madame Roberts, who daily feeds some six thousand workmen, in the open air, yet sheltered from the weather. Her daily bill of fare is, cabbage-soup, a slice of bouilli (beef), a piece of bread, and a glass of wine. The six thousand dine, pay twopence, and are refreshed. She gains one farthing by each customer.

**HOW TO BUILD A HAPPY HOME.**—Six things are requisite. Integrity must be the architect, and tidiness the upholsterer. It must be warmed by affection, lighted up with cheerfulness; and industry must be the ventilator, renewing the atmosphere, and bringing in fresh salubrity day by day; while over all, as a protecting canopy and glory, nothing will suffice except the blessing of God.